



United States
Environmental Protection
Agency

Field Work Begins On Cleanup Investigation

Ellsworth Industrial Park
Downers Grove, Illinois

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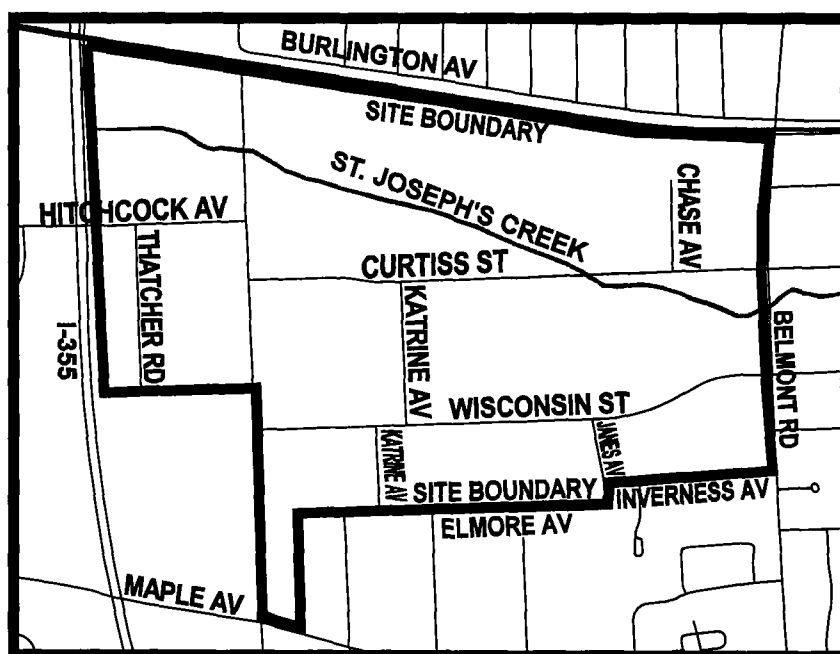
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U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has begun field work this fall for a remedial investigation and feasibility study of the Ellsworth Industrial Park site. A remedial investigation involves gathering soil and water samples to determine what hazardous substances are present, how much there is and where it is located. A feasibility study is an evaluation of alternatives for cleaning up the hazardous substances. The remedial investigation and feasibility study combined may take 12 to 18 months to complete. At this time, the Agency is developing a formal work plan to conduct the remedial investigation.

Field work may last roughly three months and will be documented in a remedial investigation report. A group of parties potentially responsible for the pollution agreed to pay up to \$1 million to EPA toward the cost of conducting the remedial investigation.

Last spring, EPA's contractor prepared a document called a *Preliminary Planning Report*. This report summarizes the work for the upcoming remedial investigation and feasibility study for the site:

- necessary planning activities before field work can begin;



The Ellsworth Industrial Park consists of about 135 light industry and commercial businesses. Many of those businesses are not contaminated with organic solvents and are not part of the investigation or cleanup activities.

- investigation activities that detail the sampling and monitoring efforts; and
- required reports that describe the nature and extent of the pollution and evaluate alternatives to clean up the site.

The following three sections provide a general overview of the *Preliminary Planning Report*.

Planning activities

Planning includes developing a site management plan, health and safety plan, and a sampling and analysis plan. The **site management plan** reviews how site access, site security and waste disposal from sampling activities will be handled. The plan also includes procedures and safeguards used to control contaminants encountered during the field work.

A **health and safety plan** complies with U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration regulations for those working on the project. This includes employee training, personal protective equipment, medical monitoring, and standard operating procedures. This plan also addresses health and safety requirements for site visitors.

A **sampling and analysis plan** defines the sampling and data collection methods to be used for the investigation. This plan will include sampling objectives, sampling locations and frequency and sample handling and analysis. It will include plans for quality assurance, field sampling and data management.

Investigation activities

Field work and investigation activities range from mobilizing personnel and equipment to data validation. The *Preliminary Planning Report* also includes the following plans to locate and identify contaminants.

- Utility corridor survey – This survey targets sump, sand and grease traps to evaluate potential sources and releases of pollution that may have not been previously identified.
- Sub-slab monitoring – Monitoring underneath building slabs or basement floors will be conducted.

- Soil sampling – Collecting and analyzing soil samples will identify potential sources of contamination and select places for additional soil borings and monitoring wells.
- Ground-water investigations – Installation of monitoring wells will allow underground water samples to be collected and analyzed. Monitoring wells will be installed into bedrock.

Reports

In addition to the formal work plan to conduct the remedial investigation, six reports will be prepared within the investigation and feasibility study process:

- Data evaluation report – Evaluates and presents the results of soil and ground-water sampling efforts.
- Human health risk assessment – Determines whether site contaminants pose a current or potential risk to human health and the environment in the absence of any cleanup action.
- Ecological (plants and wildlife) risk assessment – The site will first undergo a process to determine if an ecological risk assessment is required. If needed, this assessment will study area plants and animals and their environment.
- Remedial investigation report – This report identifies specific contaminants, estimates how much pollution was found, and determines where the hazardous substances were located.
- Remedial alternatives technical memorandum – Lists a range of cleanup alternatives that will be evaluated in the feasibility study.
- Feasibility study – Details the evaluation of cleanup alternatives against EPA criteria for selecting a plan.

Once finalized, each report will be made available to the public by placing it in the site information repository located at the Downers Grove Public Library.

Legal agreements

In 2005, EPA and a group of parties potentially responsible for the pollution entered into a legal agreement in which those parties agreed to pay EPA to conduct the remedial investigation and feasibility study. The group is current or past owners and operators of properties at the industrial park.

Business operations at these industrial properties are believed to have used solvents (cleaning agents for oil and grease), and chemical releases have been detected or are suspected at those properties.

EPA and Illinois Environmental Protection Agency identified three chemicals of primary concern in preliminary soil and ground-water sampling at the industrial park and in wells downhill from the site: TCE (trichloroethylene), PCE (tetrachloroethylene) and TCA (1,1,1-trichloroethane).

In 2003, a group of potentially responsible parties, including many of the members of the current group, entered into an agreement known as an Administrative Order of Consent with EPA to repay loans to the village of Downers Grove for up to \$4.3 million to connect about 800 residences south and east of the industrial park to a public drinking water supply.

Site history

In the spring of 2001, Illinois EPA was investigating the ground water at the Lockformer site in Lisle, Ill., located west of the Ellsworth Industrial Park. As part of the Lockformer investigation, Illinois EPA collected samples from private wells of residences from the east side of I-355. Results of samples from these private wells showed contamination different from that found at the Lockformer site. Illinois EPA then initiated a separate investigation in the Downers Grove area.

Illinois EPA sampled around 160 private wells in July 2001. The results of this round of sampling showed contamination of PCE and TCE. Some wells had PCE or TCE contamination above federal drinking water standards.

In September 2001, Illinois EPA collected an additional 169 well samples in unincorporated Downers Grove, primarily south of Maple Avenue and east of Belmont Road. Results of some of these samples also showed pollution levels above federal drinking water standards.

To better define the extent of contamination, more samples were collected in October and November 2001 and January 2002. At that time EPA became involved in the ground-water investigation. EPA and Illinois EPA also collected soil and ground-water samples from locations in Ellsworth Industrial Park.

In October 2002, EPA, in coordination with the state of Illinois, sent special notice letters to 19 businesses at the industrial park requesting they enter into negotiations to investigate and address the park's soil and area ground-water contamination.

In November 2002, the Illinois Department of Public Health, in cooperation with U.S. Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry issued a public health assessment for the ground-water investigation. The assessment concluded exposure to the contaminated ground water was a public health hazard.

Water connections to the 800 homes near the industrial park began in the fall of 2003 and were completed in spring 2004.

In 2003 and 2004, EPA conducted initial studies of the area to determine ground-water properties, distribution and flow direction

Community involvement

EPA and Illinois EPA worked together to assist area residents in organizing an advisory group to interact with area residents and government agencies about the contamination and the industrial park. In 2002, a Community Advisory Group was formed and initial membership consisted of hundreds of individuals representing more than 300 homes.

In 2003, EPA visited with 64 area residents and Downers Grove public officials to discuss their concerns regarding the ongoing environmental activities in Ellsworth Industrial Park. Based on these community interviews, EPA created a document known as a community involvement plan. EPA and Illinois EPA also participated in public meetings.

EPA will provide community involvement activities for the public to share information about the progress of the remedial investigation and feasibility study. These activities may include public meetings, fact sheets and news releases.



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Information library

An official government information repository is a file for public review containing documents about the Ellsworth Industrial Park site and the Superfund program. The Ellsworth Industrial Park information repository is located in the reference section of the:

Downers Grove Public Library
1050 Curtiss Road

An administrative record, which contains all of the information upon which the selection of a cleanup plan is based, is available to the public at the Downers Grove library and at the EPA Region 5 records center. The records center is located on the seventh floor of 77 W. Jackson Blvd. in Chicago. The records center is open Monday – Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. The center's phone number is (312) 886-0900.

On the Web

This fact sheet and other site information can be found on this EPA Web site:

www.epa.gov/region5/sites/ellsworth